



THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



Commission Meets With Italian Ambassador

On February 6, 2004, members of the Commission were invited to attend a meeting at the Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia, organized by the Honorable Lorenzo Mott, Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together various delegates from PA, NJ, DE, NY and MD to network and explore ways to promote the Italian heritage, culture and commercial relations. The keynote speaker at this event was the Italian Ambassador to the US, the Honorable Sergio Vento.

The Commissioners meeting with the Ambassador included Larry Paragano and Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari.

As New Jersey was the first state to create a State Commission related to Italian Heritage, the Commissioners present discussed plans and ideas with the Ambassador, Governor Rendell of Pennsylvania and legislators from Delaware. The Commission hopes to deepen these interstate and international ties during the course of the coming year to create additional programs in New Jersey.



Ambassador Sergio Vento

Community Advisory Council Appointed

The Commission's Community Advisory Council, which works closely with the Community Outreach Relations Committee, convened a very successful first working session at Rutgers University on February 10th. The Commission recently appointed 14 members from throughout the State of New Jersey to form this new body. Chairpersons Dr. Eileen Poiani and Mr. Frank Gargione

presided over the session, which reviewed a series of potential new statewide programs for the Italian Heritage that could be developed over the next five years. The first major undertaking by the Council will be the execution of the Commission's March Italian Leadership Convocation which will bring together community leaders to lay plans for programs.

The Commission would like to congratulate the new appointees:

Advisory Council Members

Mr. Louis Capelli
Mr. Michael Cino
Mr. Joseph Coccia
Mr. Ralph Contini
Mr. Anthony DiMeo III
Dr. Peter DeSciscio
Mr. Michael Genevrino
Ms. Delores Kirk
Mr. John Marino
Ms. Daniela Puglielli
Ms. Mariuccia Romano
Mr. Peter Tarquinio
Dr. Ray Yannuzzi
Dr. Rosa Zagari-Marinzoli
Mr. Salvatore Gambino

Governor Tasks Commission With New Effort



Governor James McGreevey

On February 17th, Governor McGreevey convened a meeting of Italian American community leaders at the State House. Present at this meeting was the New York Consul General of Italy, the Honorable Antonio Bandini; Mr. Roberto Luongo, the Director of the Italian Trade Commission; and Senator Joseph Cognilio. Mr. Larry Paragano represented the Commission.

At this meeting, the Governor and the Consul General requested that the NJ Italian American community work together to develop new ways to promote cultural and commercial exchanges between NJ and Italy. The Governor tasked the Commission to explore means of coordinating projects and to develop new ideas and programs for the State of New Jersey and the Italian Government.



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Chairman's Message

In an age where borders are rapidly eroding, Americans of all backgrounds are seeking today to remember the historic ties that bind their unique heritages and cultures. The United States, founded as a multi-ethnic society, is not a mere territory. It is an idea of fellowship

that binds us first and foremost as sons and daughters of America, and then binds us to our distinct cultures that contributed to the creation of this great nation. As we enter the new year, we are proud of our unity as Americans; but we also honor our traditions as Italians and Italian Americans.

We are now entering the 3rd year of existence of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission and we are



Commission Chairman Larry Paragano

very proud of the efforts that so many have achieved through diligent labors of love. Our Commissioners, Committee Members, Council Members and Board Members throughout the State of New Jersey have contributed significantly to the execution of many programs and events over the past two years. The Commission encourages your participation and hope for your support in this new year.

Commission Upcoming Events

- **March 26, 2004 (Friday)**
Italian Heritage Day – Student conference in Cedar Grove organized by ITANJ
- **March 27, 2004 (Saturday)**
3rd Italian American Leadership Convocation – Half-day conference at Forsgate Club in Cranberry
- **April 16, 2004 (Friday)**
“Case of Italian in NJ” – Panel workshop at NECTFL Conference in New York City
- **April 24, 2004 (Saturday)** –
Italian Liberation Day – Public Ceremonies at Governors Mansion
- **June 4 and June 5, 2004** –
Teach the Teachers Professional conference for Italian teachers at Montclair State University

Curriculum Project Writers' Workshop

During the past six months, the Commission's School Curriculum Development Committee (CDC), chaired by Dr. Gilda Rorro, continued to progress on the development of the Italian and Italian American Heritage Curriculum Project. Designed in concert with the Department of Education, this curriculum model is being developed for primary and secondary school classes in New Jersey. Unlike other models designed specifically for use by Italian Language classes, the CDC's infusion model concentrates on the development of lesson plans and teaching materials for all subject areas and all students in NJ.

The objective of the curriculum is to highlight the global contributions that ancient and modern Italian culture has made in fields such as science, mathematics, the arts, popular culture or civics. The mission is to reduce the negative stereotyping of Italians and Italian Americans by making students in New Jersey aware of these achievements.

On January 22, the CDC convened its second curriculum writers workshop, held at Seton Hall University. Writers and editors reviewed and discussed six volumes of lesson plans and materials prepared during the initial writing phase of the project



Curriculum Meeting at Seton Hall

in 2003. Ten teachers from various subject areas were introduced to the project and began developing ideas for a new battery of lesson plans for students. These plans will be developed by the summer, in order to begin the Phase I Pilot to various school districts in the Fall of 2004. The lesson plans are being written “by teacher, for teachers” to improve infusion.



Executive Director Appointed

The Commission appointed Mr. Roger Marinzoli in January to serve as the Executive Director of both the Commission and the Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies at Rutgers University. Mr. Marinzoli was selected as a result of a search process that began in July 2003, which assessed over twenty possible candidates for the dual position. The new incoming Executive Director will serve as a full time administrator of both entities and is intended to replace Dr. Robert Freda, who served as the part-time Executive Director of the Commission since 2002.

Mr. Roger Marinzoli joins the Commission from Wall Street, where he served as Chief Financial Officer of Marco Polo Network, Ltd. and as an investment banking partner at Marco Polo Partners,



New Executive Director Roger Marinzoli

LLC. Prior to his work for these international financial service companies, Mr. Marinzoli served as a Vice President for Lehman Brothers, working on mergers, financings and strategic advisory for a range of international companies out of New York, London, Hong Kong and Latin America. Part of his work included advising major Italian corporations, such as Telecom Italia and Olivetti.

Mr. Marinzoli holds degrees from Georgetown University and The Johns Hopkins University. He lived in Italy for over seven years and speaks Italian fluently. He has lectured at The Johns Hopkins University and The Wharton School of Business and has been involved in a variety of university and public school educational programs during his international career.



New Commission Liaison Michelle Kim

Thanks to Mr. McIntyre

The Commission would like to thank Mr. Terry McIntyre of the Governor's Office for his tremendous assistance to the Commission. The Commissioners wish him well in his new endeavors.

Welcome to New Liaison

The Commission would like to welcome Ms. Michelle Kim of the Governor's Office, who will be serving as the Commission's new government liaison. The Commissioners look forward to working with her in the new year.

CAVOUR'S COLUMN

The primary objective of all of the Commission's educational programs is to increase public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the culture, heritage and contributions of Italians and Italian Americans to world civilization, America and New Jersey. This mission is critical in helping to develop unity among the 2 million Italian Americans in NJ, because it provides a source of information for anyone interested in the Italian Heritage.



**By Dr. Robert
Freda**

Executive Director
of the New Jersey
Italian and Italian
American Heritage
Commission

This Column is named after Cavour, founder of "Il Risorgimento", the 1847 Italian Newspaper, which promoted Italian unity, heritage and identity.

As a State Agency, the Commission can help coordinate the efforts of the State's 400 Italian American organizations by serving as an association through which other groups can interact in concert. Over the long run, the Commission can become an important tool in the effort to build unity and educate the public.

Leaders from nearby states, seeking to replicate the NJ Commission, have requested assistance in establishing similar entities. To the best of our knowledge, the NJ Commission is the first state commission of its kind in the US – something that NJ Italian Americans helped establish as a lasting model for other states to follow.



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Supporting Basilone Stamp



Photograph of Sgt. Basilone

February 19th marks the official memorial day in New Jersey honoring the life and service of World War II hero, Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone. Sgt. Basilone, who hailed from Raritan, was the only enlisted Marine in World War II to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross and the Purple Heart. In 2002, Governor McGreevey proclaimed February 19th as "Gunnery Sergeant John Basilone Day" to honor the memory of an Italian American citizen of NJ.

Public momentum has been building over the past few years throughout the United States to petition the US Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp in his honor. A number of states and cities, including NJ, issued proclamations supporting the commemorative stamp process. In NJ alone, hundreds of thousands of citizens have signed petitions to accelerate this process.

At the behest of a number of citizens and Italian American organizations in NJ, the Commission has issued a Resolution calling for the expeditious issuance of this stamp. By advising the NJ Government of the public support, the Commission hopes that the memory of Sgt. Basilone will be properly honored.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law on in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey

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